Social Science and Literary Criticism: What is at stake?

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Abstract

As the variety of methods used by biblical scholars mul-
tiplies, new sub-disciplines are being born that all too
often leave specialists isolated from each other. While
at some points the various methods complement each
other, at others they remain contradictory or mutually
exclusive. Two of the newer such methods, literary criti-
cism and social-science criticism, have until now re-
mained in isolation. In recent months, however, a dialo-
gue has begun to emerge that seeks to explore the com-
mon ground or lack thereof between these two methods.
This article is a beginning reflection by a social-science
critic on some of the issues involved.

*Biblical scholarship is perhaps at a major crossroads in its modern de-
velopment as regards the nature of biblical narratives. It has been diffi-
cult to decide whether biblical narratives are about real or fictive events.*

(Funk 1988:296)

*At issue in the debate is the question of which should dominate in tex-
tual interpretation, the information internal (intrinsic) to the text or con-
textual information that is external (extrinsic) to the text, like the author's
intent, his biography or the historical and cultural climate of his times.*

(Petersen 1985:6)

*Currently, however, the debate among literary critics hinges on the re-
lated question of just how determinitive even intrinsic textual informa-*

tion is of our understanding and interpretation of texts. One polar position in the debate is that of radical determinacy (e g, E D Hirsch), in which it is believed that valid interpretations can be arrived at; the other polar position is that of radical indeterminacy (e g, J Derrida), in which it is believed that we cannot validly interpret a text because texts have many meanings, not merely one right one.

(Petersen 1985:6)

The three quotations above locate the ground from which most of the emerging discussion between social science and literary critics arises.[1] Strictly speaking, of course, not all the arguments are special ones between literary and social-science critics. Some are between literary critics and individuals doing historical analysis of any kind, while others are among literary critics themselves. Yet in one way or another almost all of them are arguments in which social-science critics have a stake.

One enters this conversation, of course, with a certain amount of trepidation. The undertones of ideological suspicion are everywhere in the literature as the advocates of interpretive determinacy and objectivity on one side battle the claimants of indeterminacy and free play on the other. Terms like 'authoritarian' and 'puritanical' fly in one direction while labels like 'escapist' and 'nihilist' fly in the other. All of that is best left aside.

Several important areas of controversy are worthy of note. First, there is the nature of narrative texts. Are the gospel texts to be understood as fiction? Are they historical? Or is the realism in them to be construed primarily as literary verisimilitude? Equally fundamental is the question about where and how meaning emerges. Is meaning fixed by the intention of the author? Is it located in the texts themselves? Is something external to the text to which the text points? Or does meaning emerge from the interaction of text and context?

We also may ask if meaning emerges in the interaction of text and reader(s)? If it does, what is the relative weight of reader and text in this regard? And what about multiple readers? If each reader interacts with the text differently, do texts always have multiple meanings? If so, where are the limits and what are the criteria of validity in interpretation? There is also the question about the nature of language? Is language sufficiently determinative that meaning can be specified? Validated? Does the possibility of multiple meanings vitiate the historical character of a text?

A related concern has to do with the formal properties of texts. Are they aesthetic objects? Are the formal markers, either deep structures or surface grammar, a key to meaning? Are they sufficient? How are the literary properties of a text re-

lated to its content? Equally important, but rarely asked, is a question about the relationship between the formal properties of the text and the world external to it.

Finally, we may ask, in what sense do authors matter? Are narrative texts communications from someone, to someone, about something? That is, do the texts tell us something? Or are they 'stories' in the technical sense – that is, do they show us something? We might even ask if they invite us to participate in something? That is, should we understand them as language events – perhaps ones which the text initiates but the reader completes?

Many other questions could be asked, of course, but perhaps these are the central ones at issue. Obviously not all of them can be taken on in a limited space. Furthermore, in addressing any of the controversies a whole spectrum of answers is possible and any answer will depend on the assumptions one makes going in. If the determinacy of language is radically questioned, for example, there can be little substance to an argument about whether the texts are fiction or history. Likewise, if we assume that meaning is permanently fixed in the text, interpretation is largely a matter of historical inquiry and there is little point to hermeneutics.

None of these are matters to be taken for granted, of course, because they are the very substance of the disagreements among us. Moreover, it is important in this regard to recognise that not all literary critics treat these matters in the same fashion. Some assume the complete autonomy of the text (new criticism), but not all. Nor do all imagine limitless polyvalency. Not all question the determinacy of language. Moreover, many literary critics are open to historical questions, including the kind asked by those interested in the heuristic use of the social sciences.

Before jumping into a discussion of the issues themselves, however, a word about presuppositions is in order. There are several underlying the work of virtually all social science critics that are important to understand. First, the fundamental working assumption of social science criticism is that language always encodes a social system. It is always concrete social communication and never a closed system of objective signs. Language brings to expression a system of shared perceptions and values and thereby gives each of us a sense of 'world' which we share with those socialised in a similar way. In a very critical sense, language reifies world and thereby constructs world. Thus as Peter Berger (Berger & Luckmann 1966; Berger 1967) and Thomas Luckmann (Berger & Luckmann 1966) have reminded us, 'life-world' is always a codification of a social reality. Moreover, as Beidelman (1970:30) points out, language is more than simply grammar, syntax and vocabulary. It is rather 'the sum total of ways in which the members of a society symbolise or categorise their experience so that they may give it order and form'. Language thus includes 'not only words but gestures, facial expressions, clothing and even household furnishings – in

short, total symbolic behavior'. Understood in this sense, language requires the kind of social semiotic analysis that underlies virtually all social science criticism.

Second, social-science critics take seriously the fact that thought, writing, reading and interpreting always take place in a particular social location and that these social locations play a critical role in the way language functions. With anthropologists of knowledge we take for granted the basic insight that there is a fundamental relationship between thought and the social conditions under which it occurs. This means that texts, like thoughts, always exist in relationship with what Peter Berger calls a 'plausibility structure', a socially constructed province of meaning in which certain things make sense.

The crucial feature of any social location, of course, is that it limits the range of experience open to a group or individual. In this way it limits the range of presuppositions, perceptions and plausible alternatives any group is likely to encounter. It is not that certain experiences produce certain perceptions, but rather that given certain experiences a limited range of perceptions should be plausible options for most of those sharing the social location. Even if rejected for other alternatives, a given perception should be understood by those who share the range of common experience. A social location, therefore, is always a heuristic construct, not a causal mechanism (Rohrbaugh 1987:113-115).

All of this is a way of saying, of course, that our sense of 'reality' is itself a social construct, and it is therefore to be understood as 'fictive' in the same sense that narrative texts are fictive. 'Reality' is not an objective item that can be set over against the fictive world of the text as if it were of a different order. The contrast between fictive world and real world is a false one. But for social-science critics it is most important to recognise that sense of reality is socially constructed. It may vary in some measure for individuals in the same society, but it remains profoundly social in character. And this means that, like language, thoughts and texts, so also the acts of writing, reading and interpreting can never be construed as merely textual acts. They are social acts as well. They all occur in and are limited by a particular social location. They all participate in the fictive character of all human symbolic interaction.

Such then are the assumptions most social science critics make going in. To us they are essential, the *sine qua non* of textual interpretation. With these presuppositions in front of us, therefore, we must turn directly to a discussion of what is at stake for us as social science critics when we read a text. We may begin by saying that social-science critics are committed to a historical reading of biblical texts. Since we have our own angle from which to view that matter, however, it is important to think about it at several distinct levels. Obviously we are not talking about a

historicising naiveté which assumes a one-to-one relationship between stories and events.

Initially an assertion of historical interest might be construed to get us into the ongoing debate about the relation of the gospel texts to the real history of Jesus of Nazareth. That is obviously a historical question at its most basic level. Yet while that debate is an important one which, in many ways, is at a crossroads in New Testament scholarship right now, and much as it might be appropriate to comment in order to discuss thoroughly the nature of fictive, fictional and historical narratives, space permits only a few simple comments. (See Funk 1988:295-298 for a discussion of the current anguish over the question of historicity.)

In assessing historical claims about the New Testament, social science criticism can make a substantial new contribution. By showing the ways in which the texts encode the social system, we can help to evaluate the plausibility of historical claims made on other grounds. We can temper the scepticism that literary scholars sometimes demonstrate (because the texts are technically fictive in nature) by helping to determine if it is literary verisimilitude or actual historical interest that is being asserted regarding a text. We also can help to distinguish among historical claims. If we can show the plausibility of a story in the social setting of village life, for example, it is a far better candidate for historical data about Jesus than a story whose only plausible setting is the pre-industrial city (see Oakman 1986). Without recourse to the social-sciences, the judgement that a text is or is not historical is all too often made on ethnocentric or anachronistic grounds. We rightly insist, therefore, that anyone trying to assert that a text claims no historical referent, or that a particular referent is or is not historical, should do so in explicitly socio-historical terms. Claims based on the latest ideological version of western idealism are singularly unpersuasive.

It is also possible, of course, to raise historical questions about literature other than allegedly historical narratives. With fictional narrative – parables for example – the ground shifts slightly and forces us to address historical concerns at new levels. One of these has to do with what literary critics call 'verisimilitude' – referred to above (also called 'recuperation', 'naturalisation', 'motivation' – see Funk 1988:293; Tolbert 1989:30, especially note 19), that is, with the 'realism' that even parables use in order to establish plausibility for a story. The social-science critic's concern for history can have much to say about how verisimilitude is created. Plausible stories, like plausible language, whether intentionally historical or intentionally fictional, are always embedded in a social system and always encode it in very substantial ways. Without that, the verisimilitude the fiction writer requires would not be possible at

all. Our concern then is that, even when dealing with fictional texts, the socially and historically dated character of the encoding system comes into play.

A good example can be found in the recent work of the Jesus Seminar of the Westar Institute (Sonoma, California). In reading through the report of the Jesus Seminar on the parables of Jesus one gets the impression that of the many criteria for authenticity the authors claim to use, one predominates (Funk, Scott & Butts 1988). It is the belief that Jesus' authentic parables pose 'outrageous' or 'highly exaggerated' situations for the reader to ponder. The authors readily acknowledge that the metaphors in parables are taken from everyday life, yet they claim that 'Jesus chooses metaphors that surprise (the leaven as as figure of the holy), or that exaggerate (everyone refuses to come to a dinner), or that satirise (the mustard seed pokes fun at the mighty cedar that represents Israel). The reader must always look for the surprising twist in the story, the unusual figure, the paradoxical pattern' (Funk *et al* 1988:16). The problem here, of course, is that one must know the typical before one can designate something atypical or surprising. The comment noted above about all the guests refusing to come when invited to a dinner provides an example. This scenario struck the Jesus Seminar participants as outrageous, exaggerated behaviour. They treated it as atypical (Funk *et al* 1988:43). But how could they know this? In fact, exactly the opposite might have been be the case. Double invitations that anticipated such difficulties were commonplace in antiquity. They are discussed in both the papyri and the Mishnah, and indeed examples of all the invited dinner guests not showing up exist elsewhere in the literature.[2] The situation is not atypical, exaggerated or outrageous at all. The parable may or may not be authentic, but the criterion has been mistakenly applied because the social situation of antiquity has not been taken seriously.[3] The Jesus Seminar Report imagines modern dinner parties and the attitudes of modern hosts and on this basis makes a historical judgement.[4] In his recent book on parables, Brandon Scott (1989:67-68) recognises this problem, acknowledging that we must know first what is typical before we can pronounce something atypical, but he then claims that only literary concerns are at issue. This brings us to yet another level at which social-science critics are committed to a historical reading of the texts. If we are right in making the claim that language encodes a social system, and if the social system that New Testament language encodes is that of the Mediterranean world in the agrarian period, then the key to deciphering the language of the New Testament cannot be derived from social systems other than the one that produced it. Here the interpreter makes a consciously historical choice. Historical or social location is not simply the 'background' of a text. It is encoded, embedded, reflected and responded to in a text. It is not a point of reference for a text, it is the text and the text is it. And since this

system of social conventions is itself a historical reality, a reality of another time, another place and another culture, it must be uncovered and recovered in order to understand in what way the text is an embodiment of it. Social-science criticism is thus historical in a very fundamental sense: it assumes that a social system of the past, from a culture that precedes the industrial revolution, is the necessary key to understanding the language in the text. And that is true whether the text claims a historical referent or not. The verisimilitude and its contravention on which parables depend is itself dependent on a historically locatable social system that the text encodes.

Related to this concern over the use of verisimilitude in the parable texts, of course, is the assertion of some literary critics that biblical texts, and particularly the parables, are to be construed as rhetorical-aesthetic objects and therefore studied primarily for their formal properties as art. For some critics this allows discussion of the parables apart from any consideration of their historical or social location because meaning is construed to emerge from the characteristics of the text as text, not from the encoding of the social system in the text.

We can leave aside the controversy over the degree to which formal characteristics in a text carry the freight claimed for them, though some structuralist claims about universality of pattern have rightly been criticised by both historians and anthropologists. For social science critics the main problem in some treatments of formal properties has once again to do with our concern for anachronism and ethnocentrism. We rightly ask whether the forms the critics claim to see are constructs conditioned by the social location of the critics themselves.[5] An example of the ethnocentric danger in judgements about form can be seen in Mary Ann Tolbert's recent work on Mark. Wearing her literary hat, Tolbert claims that one of the key differences between ancient and modern fiction is that in modern fiction 'character' is highly developed whereas in ancient literature it is portrayed in a 'flat, stereo-typical, passive and static manner' (Tolbert 1989:76). She notes especially that the 'illustrative characters of ancient literature are static, monolithic figures who do not grow or develop psychologically' (Tolbert 1989:77). To her credit she argues that we must take this difference seriously, but like many literary analysts she treats this formal feature as if it were a simple result of the rudimentary quality of ancient fiction. She seems unaware that flat, stereotypical characterisations are an encoding of the ancient Mediterranean social system which understood all people in that way in real life. Likewise, she seems unaware that the psychological, introspective character of Western novels encodes the social system in which we live and in which we typically view human nature in those terms. We are introspective. Ancient Mediterranean people were not, for reasons having to do with honour-shame values and

dyadic views of personality (Malina 1979:126-138; Malina 1989:127-141). The diffe-rences are thus much more than literary. They are social and historical as well. We must always ask, therefore, the degree to which aesthetic and formalistic considera-tions are in the anachronistic and ethnocentric eye of the beholder.

One additional and fundamental controversy in which we as social science cri-tics have a stake has to do with the so called relation of text and context. As Nor-man Petersen (1985:6) points out, these are 'the two principle sources of informa-tion bearing on the interpretation of texts' though a substantial argument exists over which should dominate interpretation, information internal to the text or contextual information that comes from outside. Here we begin to confront one of the most important issues in our discussion: How and where does textual meaning emerge? Many, of course, acknowledge that text and context interact in the production of meaning. Whatever weight they may assign to context, they assume that it provides the backdrop for reading and interpretation. Unfortunately, however, that does not quite say enough for either the historian or the social science critic.[6]

At the outset we acknowledged that the so called 'real' world is itself a fictive construct. It does not differ in kind from the fictive world that narrative creates. That contrast is a false one that drives a non-existent wedge between text and con-text. And, most emphatically, we would argue that real world, context, call it what you will, cannot be simply 'background' for reading a text. That likewise implies the two are discreet realities. But the text encodes, is embedded in, reflects, responds to and is inextricably dependent on the social life-world it embodies. Divorce it from that world and it is no longer the same text. The point is a critical one. Removed from its social location in the Mediterranean world of the first century, a parable is no longer the same parable. After all, the plausibility the parables attempt to in-voke is a plausibility in their world, not ours. An additional problem, now widely re-cognised by literary critics themselves, is that construing text and context as separa-ble entities not only fails to take social location seriously, it fails to take the reader into account as well. Readers, at least real readers, do stand outside the text. Moreover, they do so in a particular social location of their own. This means that the question of meaning cannot be divorced from the question about who is doing the reading. Texts without contexts are no less complete than texts without readers. And that is because the real reader brings to the act of reading a world of his/her own, from which a great deal is drawn into the conversation as text and reader inter-act.

It is obvious that not everything necessary to a conversation can be written down because a text simply cannot say everything that needs to be known about a topic under discussion. To do so would be tedious in the extreme and clutter the text to

the point of unreadability. Inevitably, then, there is much that must be left to the imagination of the reader because an author depends on a reader to fill in the gaps from the life-world they share in common. Successful communication can be carried on in no other way (Malina 1991:3-24).

Thinking about modern western readers reading ancient Mediterranean texts requires us to clarify the situation one step further. Each time a text is read by a new reader, the fields of reference tend to shift and multiply because each new reader fills in the text in a unique way. Among literary theorists this phenomenon is usually called 'recontextualisation', a term referring to the multiple ways different readers may 'complete' a text as a result of reading it from within their different social locations. (Texts may also be 'decontextualised' when read ahistorically for their aesthetic or formal characteristics.) Such recontextualisation is of course a familiar phenomenon to students of the Synoptic Gospels. It is nicely illustrated in the work of redaction critics, for example, who have shown us how shifts in the settings of the parables of Jesus in the various gospels have altered their emphasis and/ or meaning (e g the parable of the Lost Sheep in Mt 18:12-13; Lk 15:4-6; Thomas 98:22-27). In whatever measure each of these new recontextualisations of the Jesus-story 'complete' the text unlike an original hearer of Jesus might have done, an interpretative step of significant proportions has been taken.

The same is true for recontextualisations into the world of the modern reader. Moving the text from the Mediterranean culture continent in which it was written to the new setting in the Western, industrialised society where it is now read, is a very far-reaching recontextualisation indeed. No New Testament writer ever imagined a twentieth century American as a real, implied or ideal reader. The social locations of the original audience(s) and the modern audience(s) differ in such significant measure that neither audience could be expected to complete the unwritten elements of the text in the same way. Of critical importance for social science critics therefore is the recognition that this particular recontextualisation, this modernisation of the text, is itself profoundly social in character. Readers socialised in the industrial world are unlikely to complete the text of the New Testament in ways the ancient authors could have imagined. We simply do not intuitively know the social system the language encodes.

One final issue we might discuss is the matter of authorial intent, especially in so far as it bears on the sense in which texts are communication from one person to another. In recent literary studies, of course, it is common to pronounce 'intentional fallacy' upon any attempt to imagine what the original author had in mind. Literary analysts are sharply critical of attempts to 'get inside the head of the author' in the hope of estimating what he/she might have intended. Since the gospel authors can-

not be questioned, it is assumed we cannot probe their intentions in any substantial way. Moreover, since different readers complete the text differently, it is assumed that it cannot have a single, that is authorial, meaning anyway. Yet one need not hold the extreme position of E D Hirsch that authorial intent is both available and determinative of all meaning in order to ask if the texts are communication in some real sense?[7] If they are, they are what someone (an author) meant to say to someone else (a reader) about something in particular. We may not be able to discover fully what that is, but that does not mean we cannot discover anything about it at all. No one would claim, for example, that the gospel writers were talking about nuclear disarmament. But there is another thing to be said here. As Walter Benn Michaels (1983:344) has shown, 'language can only be understood as a set of intentional acts,' and thus 'to use language at all [as speaker, hearer, writer or reader] is to acknowledge the centrality of intention'. He argues that 'what a text means and what the author intends it to mean are the same thing,' hence interpretation is largely a matter of trying to figure out what this intention might be (Michaels 1983:344). Or as Stanley Fish (1983:283) puts it: 'It is impossible not to construe it [intention]' in the act of interpreting. This is not, of course, an argument that we can get inside the head of an author. The point Fish (1983:283) seeks to make is rather that intentions are a form of 'conventional' behaviour and are to be 'conventionally' read. So that instead of referring the matter of intention back to an original author, an individual, a social science critic will insist that it be referred back to an original system of social conventions that has left its mark in the encoding conventions of the text.

In this connection, some literary critics, particularly in parable research, are uneasy about claims of authorial intent because they argue that parables have no intended message, no subject matter in any direct sense. Being inherently polyvalent, they suggest that parables are not information about anything but rather are language events meant to explode the world of the hearer/reader and open up possibilities for a new 'world' to come into being.

But as Terry Eagleton (1983:79) points out, such a theory is both anachronistic and ethnocentric. It is 'based on a liberal humanist ideology: a belief that in reading we should be flexible and open-minded, prepared to put our beliefs into question and allow them to be transformed.' The ideal reader, the competent reader, is the liberal humanist. An ideologically committed reader is assumed to be an inadequate reader since he/she is 'less likely to be open to the transformative power of literary works' (Eagleton 1983:79). Moreover, as Eagleton (1983:79) points out, the irony here is that the claimed character of the text (open-ended) aims at producing the very kind of reader (open-minded) that it already presupposes. In fact, if the text really means to explode our pre-existing convictions, and thus if holding one's con-

victions rather lightly is the pre-condition of competent reading, then 'having them interrogated and subverted by the text is not really very significant' after all. The irony here, of course, is that even an open-ended parable is a text with a definable authorial intent. It 'intends' to explode the life-world and assumptions of the reader. But even beyond this is the fact that if texts are absolute in the sense that they can be divorced from all questions of authorial intent, they are also separable from the social context of origin and hence are treated not only ahistorically but also asocially. Such an approach lends itself to the excessive individualism of Western societies, but depends upon a virtual denial of the anthropology of knowledge and the social location of thought. Looming large here, of course, is the matter of multiple meanings in texts or, as some literary critics would prefer to put it, the matter of determinacy and indeterminacy. In denying the value of authorial intent, some critics seek to make room for the kind of polyvalence that has been elevated to essence in parable studies, though most argue that polyvalence exists in virtually all texts whether parables or not. This is an important issue since it is clear that if a text can mean anything, it really means nothing at all: It is merely a vehicle for what its latest reader wishes to say. Nor can a completely polyvalent text be construed as communication in any strict sense of the term. There is rather widespread agreement, therefore, that limits on polyvalence exist even if not all agree on where or how to place them. The one item on which all social science critics would insist, however, is that a particular social system represents a control on multivalency that we cannot overlook. A limited range of experience means a limited range of plausibility structures and therefore a limited range of meanings. The new and novel are always possible, but even they participate in the dominant social matrix. The issue here, of course, is validity in interpretation and in her new book on Mark, Mary Ann Tolbert (1989:10-13) lists several criteria for 'adjudicating' among a list of multiple interpretations. These criteria are not to be used, she argues, to discriminate between 'right and wrong' interpretations (which are in theory ruled out), but rather between interpretations that are more or less 'persuasive' to 'modern' readers. We may note in passing that the problems with Tolbert's list are legion, hence some would no doubt want to formulate it differently. But the real issue here is not the adequacy of Tolbert's list. It is rather that any list of criteria for validity in interpretation must be prefaced with a critical assumption. Unless we buy into the fallacy of the autonomous text, authorial intent (whether or not we can say fully what it is) and authorial location in the Mediterranean world of the first century mean that plausible interpretations, if they are truly interpretations and not platforms, and if they are truly interpretations of *this* text rather than some other, are limited to those that address the authorial audience, not the modern one. Ethnocentric and anachronistic read-

ings may be interesting, but they fail to take seriously a communicative dimension in the text, they disrespect the very creativity of the author which the literary critic claims to be constitutive of the text and they allow the needs of the modern reader ('interesting', 'persuasive to the modern reader') to overshadow the text to such degree that it ceases to be little more than a set of directions for self-expression. We thus emphatically assert the need to take authorial intent – in the sense of social convention – seriously if an interpretation is claimed to be an interpretation of a particular text rather than some other one.

Obviously these questions and reflections could go on. But in looking over the ramblings above, it seems that a number of matters stand out for those who are interested in the social sciences and New Testament interpretation. It really does matter to us that authors, texts, audiences, readers and meanings are understood to encode and incarnate historically and culturally locatable social systems. It does matter that the range of meanings in a text is limited by the social system the text encodes and that wrenching it away from that system irretrievably alters the text. It does matter to us that texts are communication and that they have authors with something to say. And finally, it matters to us that writing, reading, hearing and interpreting are all, in a fundamental and inviolable sense, the most social of acts.

Endnotes

1. The first significant discussions took place at the 1991 Society of Biblical Literature Meeting in Kansas City. Further efforts are planned for 1992 and 1993.

2. Cf Lam R 4:2; see also Es 5:8; 6:14; Philo, Opif 78. For the papyri see Kim (1975).

3. For a discussion of the parable of the Great Banquet in a social-science perspective, see Rohrbaugh (1991).

4. For further discussion of the problem of ethnocentric historical judgements, see Freyne (1988:19) and Sanders (1985:7, 125-129).

5. This latter point is nicely made in the work of Terry Eagleton (1983:108) who argues that treating texts apart from the social and historical settings that produced them is, after all, just the latest chapter in the history of classical Western idealism.

6. To those interested in history, especially social history, and convinced of its crucial place in textual interpretation, the 'new historicism' is a welcome reaction (see Lentricchia 1980).

7. For an excellent discussion of the weakness of Hirsch's position, see Eagleton (1983:67-74).

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